Homewood/Point Breeze Urban/Architecture Proposal

Urban Laboratory
garfield / friendship
homewood / point breeze

penn avenue corridor
At Carnegie Mellon University all students in their final year of the Bachelor of Architecture program enter the Urban Laboratory.

The purpose of the Urban Laboratory is to provide students with a pre-professional studio in which they experience the realities of designing in an actual urban context.

Every part of the Pittsburgh metropolitan region is chosen for study. This enables students to visit their sites, meet with citizens, interview representatives of public agencies and the investment sector, and to set up their design programs in a climate of accountability.

Three areas of study were chosen for the 1997-98 Urban Laboratory: the rapidly growing northern suburb of Cranberry; Oakland, the university and institutional, core of Pittsburgh; and the Penn Avenue Corridor.

As in previous years the Urban Laboratory was divided into two parts coinciding with the Fall 1997 and Spring 1998 Semesters. In general terms, the products of the Fall Semester were comprehensive urban policies, written and visualized; and the products of the Spring Semester were the detailed urban and architectural design of target situations.

In the past two years a Masters Degree in Urban Economic Sustainability program has been initiated in the H. John Heinz School of Public Policy. Students in this program, bringing skills in economic projection and public policy, join the Urban Laboratory providing students from both Architecture and Public Policy exposure to the interdisciplinary nature of urban design.

For the 1997-98 Fall and Spring Semesters the Penn Avenue Corridor was selected as the focus of study for two Urban Laboratory Studios (those of Professor David Lewis and Professor Alan Simpson) and the Heinz School students. The Penn Avenue Corridor runs from Pittsburgh’s Downtown in the west to suburban Moroeville in the east.

Along its length are several communities offering a variety of urban characteristics. For the 1997-98 Urban Laboratory two studios were formed, one to study the Friendship and Garfield communities, and the second to study the North Point Breeze.
and Homewood communities.

As in previous years, the products of the Urban Laboratory are recorded in published reports which are made available to the communities concerned and to the City Authorities. There is also a public exhibition of the recommendations made at the end of the Spring Semester, coinciding with Graduation.

The Urban Laboratory is a pre-professional interdisciplinary program, involving students in their final year of the Bachelor of Architecture program and students from the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy.

The subject of this report is a comprehensive urban design and policy statement produced by each of four teams for Homewood and North Point Breeze. Each team was asked to simulate a professional interdisciplinary firm, and to go through the steps a professional firm would take, starting with responding to a Request for Proposal from the City of Pittsburgh.

Homewood and North Point Breeze are two highly contrasting neighborhoods separated from each other by a railroad and a busway. Homewood is substantially an African American neighborhood with high unemployment, deterioration, poverty, and crime. North Point Breeze is a racially integrated and historic neighborhood with tree-lined boulevards and mansions.

Each interdisciplinary team, in the Fall Semester completed the following stages of work: Physical and Social Survey; Exploration and Analysis; Preparation of Alternative Urban Design Strategies; the Development of the Preferred Urban Design Strategy/Alternative; and Final Presentation of Recommendations and Proposals. Students and Faculty held meetings and seminars with citizens, representatives of City Agencies, representatives from the private investment and development sectors, and representatives of Community Development Corporations.

Professor David Lewis.
Fall Semester Urban Laboratory School of Architecture Carnegie Mellon University.
Professor David Lewis

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We are enthusiastic to submit a proposal for the Penn Avenue Corridor study in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The opportunity to work with an area filled with potential is very appealing to us. Pittsburgh is renowned for the strength and diversity of its neighborhoods, each with a distinctive quality and identity stemming from its history, community, and culture. The Penn Avenue Corridor passes through many of these neighborhoods, but the area that shows the greatest interest, potential, and challenge is the contrasting neighborhoods of Point Breeze, North Point Breeze, Homewood, and Brushton.

By visiting the Penn Avenue Corridor, we have found that Point Breeze is a professional, white, upper-class neighborhood, North Point Breeze is a mixed middle-class neighborhood, and Homewood and Brushton is a primarily black low-income neighborhood. The separation of economic class, as well as the racial segregation, has led to a physical, social, cultural, and economic isolation; the neighborhoods rarely interact with each other. Furthermore, the lack of a community center, deteriorating housing stock, and underused resources within Homewood and Brushton have classified it as a region in need of reorganization and planning, more so than Point Breeze and North Point Breeze. In interviewing the residents of Homewood and Brushton, it was evident they felt their neighborhood is unsafe, in need of improvement, and lacks a commercial / community center for all ages.

Urban / Architecture proposes to turn the neighborhoods of Homewood and Brushton into an active, sustainable community within the Pittsburgh region. In reestablishing a community center of professional offices, retail, and cultural institutions, local and regional residents will be able to find work, products and services, and activities supplied in one central location. Residents of Point Breeze and North Point Breeze will find it more convenient and pleasant to travel to Homewood for groceries, breaking the physical, social, and economic barrier existing between the neighborhoods. Planned urban spaces, reorganization of public transportation, and the reestablishment of community activities take advantage of Homewood and Brushton’s resources. Programs to provide assistance with home ownership and improvements to the existing housing stock will improve the quality of life and image within the community, attracting residents from the outside region.

Enclosed please find our proposed recommendations for reconnecting the neighborhoods of Homewood and Brushton to the communities along the Penn Avenue Corridor.
The Penn Avenue corridor extends from downtown Pittsburgh into Wilkinsburg, linking more than ten distinctive neighborhoods.
The chosen area of study focuses on the contrasting neighborhoods of Point Breeze, North Point Breeze, Homewood, and Brushton.
Although in close proximity to each other, the neighborhoods of Point Breeze, North Point Breeze, Homewood, and Brushton rarely interact with each other. Point Breeze is a professional, white, upper-class neighborhood, North Point Breeze is a mixed middle-class neighborhood, and Homewood and Brushton is a primarily unskilled, black, low-income neighborhood. The separation of economic class and racial segregation has led to a physical, social, cultural, and economic isolation.
The figure ground shows the building massing and density in black, while also exhibiting open or unbuilt space in white. It also hints to city grids and street width changes in each neighborhood. The large manufacturing and warehouse buildings in North Point Breeze are quickly identifiable, as well as the East Busway, which divides North Point Breeze and Homewood.
The streets represent areas accessible by vehicular traffic, as well as connections between landmarks through paved paths.

avenue corridor

urban / architecture

streets

homewood and point breeze
The topography shows the physical geography of the terrain, where each line represents five feet of altitude. The neighborhoods of Point Breeze, North Point Breeze, Homewood, and Brushton are surrounded by low level hills, contributing to their physical isolation.
The street grid reveals distinctive neighborhoods or 'urban systems' with its own grid orientation. Furthermore, by comparison with the topography, a close relationship with geography and infrastructure can be found. While Point Breeze has no visible grid assembly, North Point Breeze begins to show some grid forming. The neighborhoods of Homewood and Brushton exhibit the strongest street grid.
The traffic density displays major vehicular pathways and locations of strong commercial activity. It can also show connection between landmarks and places of importance.
urban / architecture
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penn avenue corridor
The primary issue that the Homewood community faces is the lack of a center. We propose a core for the community focused along Homewood Avenue between Frankstown Avenue and North Point Breeze. Homewood Avenue is the spine of the core.
The Homewood Avenue spine is anchored by nodes: a cultural node in the north, and the entry node in the south. The predominant fabric along the spine is retail with an institutional node placed within this fabric, strengthening the ties among the existing resources.
Reconfiguration of the railroad crossing, so problematic as an isolating barrier, softens the edge between North Point Breeze and Homewood.
The entry node is designed to create a more friendly link between North Point Breeze and Homewood. Existing housing is kept and placed next to the bus station off the busway. Commercial activity continues from Homewood into North Point Breeze, pulling the citizens into the community core.
The cultural node extends the community core to the residences in the north. It contains an art gallery, theatre, retail and workshops, all relating to the heritage of the community and continuing that knowledge to others.
The intersection of Homewood Avenue and Frankstown Avenue proposes to create a terminus by placing the art gallery [above] and the theatre [below] on two of the main corners.

urban / architecture

cultural node

homewood and point breeze
The community core comprises of retail and professional offices, as well as the center of opportunity [CCAC] and the community center.
The community center provides a central location for individual needs, as well as recreational facilities for the YMCA/YWCA, a community gathering space, conference center, and group activity and awareness offices.
The use of an arcade within in the main retail area creates a more human scale, as well as protects people during bad weather.
As sometimes seems the case, the solutions for the future lie in successes of the past and an understanding of how those successes led into failure. Homewood is a town full of people who are hard-working, civic-minded, and striking a beautiful balance between work and leisure. It is a border town in a metropolis which is in the midst of a population decline. It is in the process of claiming back nature, and redefining its meaning and image apart from the city that consumed it in the era of industrialization. At the same time, this process of integration within the boundaries of the city leaves behind a quite disillusioned neighborhood when the city's infrastructure can no longer support it as equally as it does its downtown. Homewood it seems is no longer profiting from a symbiotic relationship with its looming metropolitan neighbor.
The proposal on the following pages is mainly an architectonic one, but its influence on the spirit of the community, the lives of its youth, and the image that outsiders will associate with Homewood will lead to a rebirth, if the built proposal is accompanied by one of economic policy. The built environment and infrastructure provide the tools by which the conscientious residents of Homewood can make a profitable use of their land, their labor and their dreams for the future.

We have focused on three main nodes within which to intervene: the commercial core of Frankstown and Homewood avenues, the connection to North Point Breeze, and the West entrance to Homewood along Frankstown (see the figure ground plan below). The other crucial detail of this proposal is the recommendation for a public transportation system within the immediate area and connected to the greater city of Pittsburgh, mainly along the Penn Avenue corridor.

All aspects of the proposal are focused on the enfranchisement of the people of Homewood. We want to see the decisions made by the people whom those decisions are meant to affect. We want to see Homewood restored to the status of a destination which it held so grandly fifty years ago. The architecture can serve as a magnet for people with money to spend. One cannot expect to do this by creating an image which outsiders are familiar with, but rather by strengthening and showcasing what Homewood is — by grasping onto its strengths and giving them clarity. We must focus on the indigenous arts, and on education. The institutions of learning must stand out and open their arms to the community. In this way, the people will gain a sense of pride in ownership, which is the catalyst for economic autonomy.
The Homewood Transit System

This light rail transit system will run through homewood and point breeze, providing a physical connection between the neighborhoods. This solution is preferrable to a bus system for two main reasons.

- It is an important response to the region’s historic development. In the economic glorydays of Homewood’s past, trolley lines formed an integral part of the character of streets.

- The rails themselves serve to delineate the path of public transportation even when the trolley is not in sight, and lend a beautiful permanent detail to the quality of the street.
The system consists of three lines, which share tracks in the central regions of homewood, but branch out in different directions. This limits the total length of any one line, shortening ride times. Two lines run exclusively in homewood. The third line will connect north and south point breeze to each other in addition to the commercial center of homewood.

The range of the transit system provides access to the entire region within a five minute walk from the closest stop. The lines connect the area youth to the parks and library, the elderly to the markets, professionals to other transit lines which run downtown, all residents to the opportunities the region has to offer.

The drawings below illustrate the new character of various streets as a result of the transit line installation.
The intersection of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues
A truly central element of the proposal is the relocation and expansion of the homewood branch of the Community College of Allegheny County. With a new name to strengthen its local identity, Homewood College reaches out into the community, providing it with opportunities for job related training. The skills provided by the programs of the college could lead to the revitalization of the commercial core, while at the same time the new facilities will physically improve the character of the town center.

Scorcio, Italy (example of street bridge)
Above is a view of the proposed graffiti court on Hamilton Avenue. This urban gallery is intended to act as an incubator for the urban arts -- a division of the arts which has hitherto not been embraced by the community as a legitimate means of expression. If allowed a space to flourish, there is no limit to the potential of this fledgling art.
The public market, in the old car barn, is a place where the residents of Homewood can shop near home, without having to rely on the use of the car.

Planometric View of the Revitalized Commercial Center

Parking Diagram

Pedestrian paths diagram
Wideman Park serves as a dialectic gathering space in the public realm. Its gently sloping plane looks onto a stage where public officials can speak on policy issues in order to keep everyone informed and involved, and where musicians can practice their art and be heard. Its defensibility is maintained by the trolley line on the north, along with the highly trafficed marketplace, and by owner occupied single family residences with front porches along Bennett to the south.
Perspective View from the Community Park on the Corner of Bennett and Sterrett
Campo in Siena, Italy

View to Clocktower from Penn Avenue
The clock tower stands as a signpost and is visible for miles around. Its placement is on axis with Homewood Avenue as it turns immediately off of Penn Avenue. Within Homewood, it acts as an orientation device, much like the Cathedral of Learning in Oakland.
The Connection to Point Breeze
Willie Stargell Field and the Busway
The commercial redevelopment of Homewood Avenue will be aided by the connection of the Homewood Rail system to the Port Authority Busway. This connection allows Homewood residents to commute without an automobile. In addition, it links the entire region to the amenities within Homewood. New commercial construction along Homewood Avenue backs the Willie Stargell playing field with outdoor eating areas and private patios.
Axonometric View of the Point Breeze Connection -- Looking From the Northwest
A land bridge has been proposed as a connection between Westinghouse Park and Willie Stargell Field across the busway which would minimize its perception as a barrier between the neighborhoods. In the place of an abrupt and enclosed staircase, a gradual rise in the landscape leads up to a pedestrian bridge in line with Lang Avenue. The bridge will also serve as a point of access to some of the other nearby amenities, such as the Carnegie Library, Homewood Montessori School, and the Contemporary Arts Gallery of Homewood (proposed).
Old Homewood Station, circa 1900

A Boston Park, Fredrick Law Olmstead
Recreational sports play an important role in leisure time activities of Homewood residents. The unused land between the newly constructed YWCA and Westinghouse High School left potential for the creation of new park space. Named after Pete Dimperio, late famed coach of the Westinghouse High Football team, the park ties a tight bond between educational institutions and athletic facilities, an important connection which coach Dimperio emphasized for his students.
The precedent of pattern book housing creates a viable armature which should be respected in the renovation of the housing stock.

Maintaining a consistent building height along the commercial mainstreets, and providing pedestrians with visual stimuli on the human scale are other considerations.
Street elevation along Frankstown Avenue, looking north

Street elevation along Homewood Avenue, looking east

Street elevation along Homewood Avenue, looking west
good stuff for sure!
Introduction

"Cities are extraordinarily complex. They are in a continuous state of change and evolution. Some of these changes are physical; some economic; some social; some technological. Not everything changes at the same pace. Some aspects of the city change rapidly; others are slower. Sometimes change is propelled by internal issues or conflicts; sometimes it is propelled by events that occur elsewhere. Nevertheless, everything in the urban web is interconnected. Every policy enacted, every action taken, has multiple impacts. The research will take into account the competing and contradictory contemporary pressures of physical, historic, political, economic, and societal forces." - David Lewis

This project will concentrate on Pittsburgh, a city characterized by its industrial past. Culturally, it is a city rich with ethnic heritage, defined by its neighborhoods. The focus of this project will be one particular neighborhood, Homewood-Brushton, a community that has undergone drastic social and economical changes in a relatively short period of time. The proposal provides the opportunity for Homewood-Brushton to become reintegrated into the urban fabric of the city while simultaneously creating a more sustainable environment for the community.
The nature of Penn Avenue changes considerably as it travels east from downtown. In the Strip, it acts as a main street, however, through Lawrenceville, Garfield/Friendship, East Liberty, and Point Breeze, it acts more as a border, separating the neighborhoods through which it passes.

As Penn Avenue travels away from the city center, the street appears to get progressively wider. This spreads the adjacent neighborhoods even further apart and increases the sense of separation. This is especially visible as Penn Avenue leaves East Liberty and approaches Wilkinsburgh.
study area:
Homewood-Brushton
North Point Breeze
Point Breeze

Our proposal will be concentrating on the Homewood-Brushton/ North Point Breeze/ Point Breeze condition. We are conscious of the isolation among the neighborhoods in this area and the physical and social barrier existing across the railroad tracks. Also, the drastic social and economic differences in such close proximity of one another requires much attention. This area presents another imposing barrier: the busway and the railroad tracks. It dramatically increases the sense of separation and isolation between the Homewood-Brushton and North Point Breeze communities.

Our proposal aims to reconnect the Homewood-Brushton community with the rest of the city of Pittsburgh. While providing the opportunity for Homewood to become integrated with the urban fabric of the city, we wish to simultaneously create a more sustainable environment for the Homewood-Brushton community.
To the north of Homewood-Brushton, a hill acts as a barrier. To the west of Westinghouse High School, a gorge becomes another barrier. These topographical conditions contributed to the isolation of Homewood-Brushton from its neighbors to the north.
This isolation has increased since the railroads were built. The tracks define the edge of Homewood-Brushton to the south and to the west. The elevated tracks create a physical barrier, an almost impenetrable wall. This feeling is increased along the southern border of Homewood-Brushton since the building of the Martin Luther King Jr. Busway, which increases not only the depth but also the height of this imposing wall. Only a handful of roads manage to penetrate this barrier and connect Homewood-Brushton, and the dark and somewhat lugubrious impression of these limited points of access increase the sense of isolation.

There are only two vehicular access points and a single pedestrian bridge from North Point Breeze into Homewood-Brushton. This physical barrier accentuated the social, economical, and racial differences between the neighborhoods. The only space these two communities share is Westinghouse Park in North Point Breeze and the Montessori School with its outdoor field in Homewood-Brushton. The two spaces are loosely connected with a pedestrian bridge.

While the connections to the west are more frequent and somewhat less imposing than the ones that tie Homewood to North Point Breeze, all points of access need to project a positive image of Homewood-Brushton.
Between 1860 and 1910, the elite occupied the area of Homewood-Brushton. The wealthy elite such as Andrew Carnegie, George Westinghouse, Henry Clay Frick, and John Heinz all owned estates here. In the late 1800's, the rising economy created a new middle class consisting of white-collar professionals. The trolley lines enabled the middle class to buy homes in the area, which began a new wave of emigration from downtown.

By the early 1900's, Homewood-Brushton was moving towards diversity, with the arrival of immigrants from Europe, as well as a growing African American population. Tension arose between the established population and the new arrivals. The railroad tracks were soon acting as a division. While the population to the south of the tracks remained upper-middle class whites, the area north of the tracks were being occupied impartially by the working class of other ethnic background or races.

In the 1920's-1940's, the population of Homewood-Brushton grew from 30,000 to 40,000. Although the population increased, the housing stock did not reflect this change. As a result, people subdivided their houses in order to accommodate more boarders and tenants.

In the 1950's, more African Americans moved into the area. By 1960, the African American population in Homewood-Brushton had grown from 25% to 70%. Under the Urban renewal policies in the late 1950's, a large area in the lower Hill District of Pittsburgh was reclaimed and demolished by the government. The African American families were forced out of their homes and many moved to Homewood-Brushton. Since most could not afford single-family homes, more houses were subdivided, and the percentage of rentals increased. These demographical changes had drastic effects. Hoping to identify with the more affluent community of Point Breeze, the predominantly white area of Homewood-Brushton, located south of the railroad tracks, proceeded to change their name to North Point Breeze. Today, with its ninety-nine percent African American population, Homewood-Brushton continues to suffer from racial segregation. In addition, it bears social and economic problems such as poverty, crime, and drugs.
issues:
- isolation
- segregation
- lack of center
- lack of positive identity
- lack of recreation/entertainment
- poverty
- crime

assets:
- strong community spirit
- strong residential base
- common cultural heritage

We propose to address the existing issues in Homewood-Brushton by building upon the present assets.
Unfortunately, the center of Homewood-Brushton is not as active as it once was. Currently, a number of these nodes of activities seems under-used or abandoned. This phenomenon has spread across the whole neighborhood, and today, only Homewood Avenue still communicates a sense of center.

We propose to reestablish, reinforce, and strengthen the initial points of arrival in Homewood-Brushton as well as develop a more active center. The nodes that need to be established occur at the following intersections:

- Frankstown Avenue and Dallas Street
- Frankstown Avenue and Homewood Avenue
- Homewood Avenue and Hamilton Street
traffic: existing

There are no significant points of access from the Penn Avenue corridor to Homewood-Brushton. Bennett Street is the main thorough­way for Homewood-Brushton in the east-west direction. This presents a problem because of the dense residential fabric through which it passes. It is also slightly narrow for a main traffic artery.

The existing traffic system shows that routes of public transportation run primarily in the east­west direction, along Bennett Street, the Martin Luther King Jr. Busway, and Penn Avenue. Presently, there are four bus routes running in the east-west direction (along Frankstown Avenue, Bennett Street, Kelly Street, and Hamilton Avenue), compared to only one bus line running in the north-south direction (along Homewood Avenue).
In order to attract visitors from surrounding neighborhoods, improvements in north-south access are necessary. Vehicular access and parking in the heart of Homewood-Brushton also become an issue with the implementation of a more active mixed-use center.

Reestablishing Frankstown Avenue as the major traffic link in the east-west direction will not only bring back the old main street, but also alleviate the traffic density in the residential areas. We propose to increase the width of Frankstown Avenue to 44 feet, with two-way traffic and street parking on both sides.

We propose to replace the existing busway with a light rail system. A light rail station along Homewood Avenue is also proposed.
The figure ground for Homewood-Brushton reveals the 'holes' in the urban fabric, caused by excessive delapidation.
To begin revitalization of the main street, we propose to integrate a series of new commercial buildings into the existing fabric. The nodes previously mentioned are intended to be the 'anchors' for new activity. These sites will accommodate functions such as the new CCAC, community theater, cultural center, and light rail station. In residential areas, we propose to infill the vacant lots and improve the housing stock, with the help of the residents.
Homewood-Brushton is a suffering community. The once-thriving commercial district on Homewood Avenue is now mostly abandoned stores. Unfortunately, the few stores remaining are not very prosperous. The old streetcar barns on Frankstown Avenue have either been abandoned or demolished. Empty lots are neglected and often left overgrown.

A strong residential base forms the northern, western, and southern quarters of Homewood-Brushton. Members of the community that live in the area have expressed desire to stay in the neighborhood. According to Mrs. Sarah Campbell, most of the houses east of Lang Street are owned. Although the houses are old, they are fairly maintained.
Building uses: proposed

Building upon the urban history of Homewood-Brushton's commercial center, we have proposed to provide commercial infill along Frankstown Avenue and Homewood Avenue.

Tying into the existing institutional are the proposed CCAC at the west end of Frankstown Avenue and the cultural center at the intersection of Frankstown Avenue and Homewood Avenue.
Homewood-Brushton is rich in resources. The dense network of religious institutions supports the community, while educational facilities are also a strong presence. The Pittsburgh High School for Creative and Performing Arts is located at the east end of Frankstown Avenue; Westinghouse High School and Belmar Elementary are in the north-western quarter of Homewood-Brushton; the only Montessori School in Pittsburgh is located to the south of Hamilton Avenue and is attended by students from all over Pittsburgh. In addition, a branch of the Community College of Allegheny County serves a population of older students. The YMCA and new YWCA are also active forces for the younger community.
A new CCAC is proposed for the intersection of Frankstown Avenue, Bennett Street, and Dallas Avenue.

A Cultural Center is proposed to be developed at the corner of Frankstown Avenue and Homewood Avenue. It is intended to be comprised of a museum, a museum park, and a community theater/performing arts center.

An Assisted Living Facility for the Elderly is proposed for the residential area, south of Frankstown. It is intended to replace the Homewood House for the Elderly, which is currently located on Frankstown Avenue.

A Community Park is proposed for the east end of Frankstown Avenue.

A new Light Rail Station is proposed to replace the existing Bus Station for the Martin Luter King, Jr. Busway.
The following pages will illustrate our strategies along Frankstown Avenue in further detail:

- CCAC
- Cultural Center: museum and theater
- Frankstown Avenue streetscape
section
relation to adjoining residences

perspective
approach to the community college
site plan
CCAC/YWCA

The layout of the proposed Community College will provide an opportunity for the students of Westinghouse High School to attend higher level classes in their fields of interests. The proximity to the High School and the new YWCA may lead to a greater interest in pursuing higher level education for the youth of Homewood-Brushton and the surrounding neighborhoods.
The Cultural Center at the intersection of Frankstown Avenue and Homewood Avenue will include a museum and a theater. A museum park in between will serve as a sculptural garden, as well as an outdoor theater for summer days.
perspective
sidewalk along the museum park
perspective
path leading into the museum park

penn avenue corridor

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projects
homwood and point breeze
section-perspective
view down frankstown avenue
Broader sidewalk allow for a more pedestrian friendly environment and allow commercial activities to spill out onto the sidewalk. The underground parking facility under the cultural center is complemented by street parking all along the commercial center.
typical sidewalk treatment along Frankstown Avenue
street section
Frankstown avenue

penn avenue corridor

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homewood avenue

The following pages will illustrate our strategies along Homewood Avenue in further detail:

- Homewood Avenue streetscape
- Light Rail station
- Improved entrance condition
typical street section
Homewood Avenue

The commercial core along Homewood Avenue is of a more intimate scale. The buildings are no more than three stories tall and the street is slightly narrower than Frankstown Avenue. The environment remains pedestrian friendly and safe, especially because of the nearby elderly housing facility and the schools.
ground level plan
light rail station
The small plaza at the base of the station provides a sense of arrival as one enters Homewood both from the station and from Penn Avenue. The parking structure adjacent to the light rail station will allow commuters to ‘park-and-ride’ to downtown Pittsburgh.
existing condition
view from North Point Breeze toward the busway
proposed
view from North Point Breeze towards the light rail transit

The heavy 'gate' condition is alleviated by the lighter steel structure. It makes this portal appear more inviting to visitors coming from the North Point Breeze direction.
elevations

typical shelter at major bus stops
Typical shelter at major bus stops

While everyone will profit from the protection of the elements especially during the colder months, the seating at the major bus stops will be especially beneficial for the elderly population.
A strong residential base is the character of the northern, western, and southern Homewood-Brunston. The mass construction of pattern-book housing in the early 1900's were not unlike other American cities of the time. Builders used pattern books rather than architects for its standardized plans, sections, and details to help with the speed of construction. The same patterns were used across the country and the same basic house sprung up in new developed cities, with minor detail changes due to local climate and materials.

These pattern books were published to let the craftsmen copy the shown plans and details directly without the help of a trained architect. With the need to house the rapidly growing urban population of American cities at the turn of the century spread the use of these pattern books spread across all towns.

In Homewood-Brunston, especially the streets north of Frankstown Avenue are lined with such pattern-book houses. Many of these buildings can be differentiated from their neighbors by paying close attention to the ornaments. We have selected to represent a few types that might be used as a guide for the proposed residential infill.
typical patterns
Frankstown Avenue

penn avenue corridor

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typical patterns
Bennett Street
typical patterns
Kelly Street

penn avenue corridor

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ANALYSIS

ISSUES & ASSETS

PROPOSAL THEMES

PROPOSAL DETAILS
This report documents Urban Surge's complete urban design process for Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze. Our enthusiasm and love for these communities is captured on the following pages. This report creates an urban design vision for these communities, a vision which can be the guiding light for these communities as they surge forward into their futures.
FIGURE GROUND
TOPOGRAPHY
STREET GRID
VACANT LOTS
PUBLIC REALM
Urban Surge began the process of urban design by analyzing the structure of Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze through a series of urban diagrams. We not only analyzed the physical structure of these communities, but also sought an understanding of the existing social, economic, and political aspects of these communities. This understanding was gained by walking and biking through the communities, talking with residents, visiting people in shops, churches, and taverns, and asking questions of community leaders.
Urban Surge began the process of urban design by analyzing the structure of Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze through a series of urban diagrams. The first of these is the figure ground drawing. The drawing is made by coloring all of the buildings black and leaving all the space between white. This drawing reveals the grain of the city: the density and pattern of space and mass in the city.

This drawing reveals many key aspects of these communities. The clear separation of North Point Breeze and Homewood can be seen in the white void (the busway) between the two communities. The institutional core of Homewood reveals itself as the existing center of Homewood, its larger buildings contrasting the fabric of smaller buildings in the surrounding neighborhoods. The boundaries of North Point Breeze become quite clear: the white swaths of the busway and Penn Ave. to the north and south and the large industrial buildings on the east and west form distinct, hard edges. The large single family homes dotting the landscape in Point Breeze contrast the dense houses and rowhomes lining grided blocks in Homewood. Some of Homewood’s assets, namely its institutional core and decent housing stock in its residential communities also stand out in this drawing. These qualities of the communities and the unique spaces which compose them are revealed by this figure ground drawing.
This analysis drawing shows the contours of the land at five-foot intervals. This drawing shows the relatively flat plane on which Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze are built. A large hill forms the boundary of Homewood on the north and east. A deep ravine, through which Washington boulevard runs to the river, creates the natural boundary of Homewood to the northwest. The other major feature on this map is the ravine and hills of Homewood Cemetery and Frick Park in the south of Point Breeze. These major landforms create the terrain and natural boundaries of these three communities.
This drawing shows all of the streets and the grids they form in the communities of Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze. Homewood is composed of a regular grid of streets and back alleys. This grid weaves together most of Homewood. However, shifts in this grid disconnect South Homewood and the northwest corner of Homewood. North Point Breeze also consists of a regular grid (without back alleys) although it is separated from Homewood by the busway. In Point Breeze, the street grids disintegrate, and cul-de-sacs create the quiet, secluded atmosphere of this neighborhood.

Penn Avenue stands forth as a major corridor dividing Point Breeze and North Point Breeze while connecting these neighborhoods to the city. Frankstown Avenue, Bennett Street, and Hamilton Street are strong east-west avenues through Homewood. Fifth Avenue, Dallas Street, Homewood Avenue and Braddock Avenue are vital north-south ribs connecting the communities.
This analysis drawing shows all of the vacant lots in the three communities. The vacant lots are shown in black; thus, the white space represents both occupied open space and land which has been built upon. Immediately, this drawing reveals the economic isolation and poverty of Homewood. Homewood has an overwhelming amount of vacant lots, especially in comparison to Point Breeze and North Point Breeze. These vacant lots contribute to the image of urban decay in Homewood. Many of these vacant lots are overgrown with weeds, and they give the community a sense of lifelessness and emptiness. Moreover, the very heart of Homewood is full of vacant lots. This gives that community no expression of community spirit in the form of a public space. This severely undermines Homewood’s civic pride. The drawing also shows a concentration of vacant lots in South Homewood and in the western part of Homewood. The housing stock in these areas is also deteriorated and in need of repair. This drawing not only uncovers some of the problems within Homewood, but it also suggests places where interventions can have the greatest impact on improving the community.
In this drawing, public gathering spaces are shown in black. Westinghouse Park creates a major open public space in North Point Breeze. Also, several residential boulevards in this community create places for kids to play and neighbors to chat. Point Breeze borders Frick Park, and several schools in the neighborhood have playgrounds where people can gather. In Homewood, few open, public spaces exist where people can gather. Willie Stargel ballfield is just across the busway from Westinghouse Park, and is a center for youth sports in the community. People also gather at a playground near the school for performing arts on Frankstown Ave. in east Homewood. Several small parks are distributed through the residential areas of Homewood; however, this community is lacking a strong public realm in which the public could gather and take pride.
Urban Surge began the process of urban design by analyzing the structure of Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze through a series of urban diagrams. We not only analyzed the physical structure of these communities, but also sought an understanding of the existing social, economic, and political aspects of these communities. This understanding was gained by walking and biking through the communities, talking with residents, visiting people in shops, churches, and taverns, and asking questions of community leaders.
This diagram depicts the barriers that exist between Homewood, North Point Breeze, Point Breeze, and their surrounding communities. The busway and train tracks create an ominous physical barrier between Homewood and North Point Breeze. Only three dark underpasses penetrate this wall between the two communities. Combined with the natural boundaries to the north and east, this wall isolates Homewood.

The busway, Penn Avenue, Fifth Avenue, and the industrial park to the east also form barriers for North Point Breeze. This community somewhat enjoys these barriers, thinking of itself as a residential enclave. Psychologically, these barriers are for them distinct edges which clearly define the limits of their neighborhood. While Homewood views the busway as a barrier which keeps the crime in and investment out, North Point Breeze views the busway as a barrier which keeps the crime of Homewood out of its neighborhood. Regardless, these barriers isolate North Point Breeze.
These issues represent what Urban Surge believes to be the underlying problems confronting the communities of Homewood:

I. Socio-economic Isolation

* Lack of Opportunity
* De-investment
* Unemployment
* Loss of Commercial Activity

Homewood contains over 11,000 low-income residents. The area has suffered from decades of deinvestment and the exportation of commercial services and jobs. Most residents must work in areas outside their community in order to work at all. Large employers which were once located in Homewood have long since vanished, such as the car barns and electric rail industry. Also, the main streets of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues have lost most of the commercial activity which once kept these streets busy with vibrant urban life. Only a few commercial operations remain and struggle to remain in business. Therefore, residents in Homewood must shop in adjacent neighborhoods, spending what little money they have in areas which are already economically stable. Moreover, no one from outside of Homewood is drawn to the community for any type of service or entertainment, leaving the community economically isolated from its neighbors.
2. Image of Urban Decay

* Physical Decay
* Perception of Fear
* Image Barrier between Neighbors

Homewood's socio-economic decline and spread of poverty has led to an image of urban decay. This manifests itself in overgrown vacant lots, deserted commercial structures, abandoned houses, and ill maintained streets and sidewalks. This decay of the physical structures and infrastructures creates an even more powerful psychological image of Homewood as a place of decadence. This image further isolates Homewood from other communities, as outsiders are afraid to come in and investors are unwilling to invest money in the community. This image of decay must be overcome within Homewood before Homewood can hope to reestablish healthy relationships with surrounding communities.
3. No Expression of Community Spirit

* Areas of Identity Isolated
* Heart of Homewood Deserted
* Emptiness Separates Neighbors

Even though some residential areas within Homewood are bustling with life and community spirit, the neighborhood has no strong expression of this community spirit in the form of public spaces. The streetscape as a public realm is weakened by vacant lots and abandoned houses which weaken the street edge. The institutional core of Homewood, while blessed with architectural monuments and public institutions, lacks any outdoor space which supports community interaction and gathering. This lack of a public realm hinders communication among residents, thus undermining the potential for a strong sense of community throughout the whole of Homewood.
The Homewood area is fraught with crime. Gangs, drugs, and violence infiltrate the neighborhood as residents struggle with poverty and lack of opportunity. Socio-economic isolation and lack of opportunities give many residents no hope and force them to turn to crime to sustain themselves or create a self-identity. Of course, this crime then sustains the image of urban decay of the community. Moreover, tension arises between the residents and the police striving to maintain order. Due to the danger and prevalent crime, police officers distrust the community and assume all its residents to be troublemakers. Community residents then learn to distrust the police, and mutual disrespect between residents and police officers escalates. Police brutality sometimes results.
5. Barriers

* Magnify Bad Image
* Isolation from Adjacent Communities

Homewood is completely severed from North Point Breeze by the large wall of the busway/train tracks. The train tracks also separate Homewood from East Liberty. Natural topography creates a barrier between Homewood and Penn Hills. All of these barriers leave Homewood completely isolated from adjacent communities and from the city of Pittsburgh. Moreover, these barriers magnify perception of fear and crime by keeping outsiders out.

6. Loss of Population

* Lack of Opportunity
* Vacant Lots
* Poor Left Behind

The socio-economic problems, image of urban decay, and crime have led to a decline in population. This decline in population has led to large areas of vacancy and a sense of emptiness in Homewood. Moreover, the loss of population further erodes the potential of the local market to support sustainable commercial ventures in town.
ISSUES
NORTH POINT BREEZE

1. Lack of Services

North Point Breeze is isolated from local commercial activities. Residents must travel a long distance in order to do their shopping. This leaves the neighborhood completely dependent upon the automobile and undermines the potential for sense of community and sustainability.

2. Control of Access

The quiet residential boulevards of North Point Breeze are invaded by heavy rush-hour traffic trying to bypass the traffic lights on Penn. Also, concern for infiltration of crime, drugs, and unwanted traffic.
This diagram depicts the relationship among the many issues in Homewood. Crime, lack of opportunity, and image of decay create this downward cycle which magnifies the problems of the community. As people are given less opportunities for employment and education, crime increases. The increase in crime leads to fear and a perception of social decay. Thus, people begin to flee Homewood leaving behind empty lots and run down buildings. These vacant lots create more opportunities for crime and a heightened image of decay. And so the cycle continues and the problems compound one another. Urban Surge recognizes the need to break this cycle so that Homewood can rebound into the vital community it once was. Urban Surge feels that this cycle can be broken by creating new opportunities for education and employment, enhancing civic pride within Homewood through new public spaces and cultural activities, and connecting Homewood to surrounding communities.
As an urban design team devoted to empowering communities and helping them revitalize themselves, Urban Surge always makes an effort to search for the assets of a community as well as its problems. These assets often become the spring board from which solid, pragmatic solutions are launched.

**HOMEWOOD**

1. **Institutional Center**
   
   The cluster of institutional monuments around Homewood Avenue between Hamilton and Bennett Streets can anchor an expanded vision for a thriving public and cultural arealm.

2. **African-American Culture**
   
   The strong ethnicity of Homewood could be fostered as a expression of unique culture. This unique expression could be offered as an asset and attraction to adjacent neighborhoods and embraced by the entire city.

3. **Remnant of Commercial Main Street**
   
   Homewood Avenue still has some commercial activity in the center of Homewood. More importantly, the image of the glory days of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues is still imprinted upon the minds of the residents. This physical remnant and resilient memory could be revived as a vision for a new commercial core.

4. **Community Spirit**
   
   Homewood possesses high community spirit. Residents use what is available to them, porches and streets, to interact with one another and develop relationships which form the basis for neighborhoods. The people know one another and can thus support one another.

5. **Housing Stock**
   
   Homewood possesses an extensive stock of old, well constructed homes. This housing stock creates the foundation for a vibrant community. Although many homes are in disrepair, the shells and main structural elements of most of the housing is in good condition.

**ASSETS**

**NORTH POINT BREEZE**

1. **Integrated Community**
   
   North Point Breeze has a healthy mix of black and white residents. The community embraces this diversity and therefore it becomes a strong asset instead of a source of tension.

2. **Housing Stock**
   
   North Point Breeze possesses many beautiful, large, old homes. The neighborhood was once the home of wealthy capitalists, and the housing stock in the neighborhood still reflects this history of investment.

3. **Strong Edges**
   
   The edges of North Point Breeze are clearly defined. This enhances the community spirit because it is easy for them to identify themselves as one neighborhood.

4. **Public Green Spaces**
   
   Westinghouse Park and the green boulevards create public outdoor spaces where residents can gather and socialize. These outdoor spaces became the public realm for the community, where they publicly express their community spirit.
Urban Surge’s analysis and understanding of the issues and assets of Homewood and North Point Breeze led to proposal themes which will form a vision for revitalized community. This vision proposes opportunity, connection, civic pride, and neighborhood support as key goals for transforming Homewood into a vibrant community. These proposals build upon the assets of each community in such a way as to offer solutions to the concerns and problems facing each neighborhood.
This diagram shows the relationship between the institutional heart, light industry/workshops in the community, and the commercial activities along Frankstown and Homewood Avenues.

In order to break the cycle of worsening conditions in Homewood, Urban Surge proposes to create a new institutional heart which will create new opportunities for education and employment. This new institutional core will include an expanded community college, vocational training, YMCA and YWCA, daycare, and other programs. All of the education will focus on giving residents of Homewood knowledge and skills which will prepare them employment or further education. Business managers, chefs, accountants, and community organizers will graduate from the facility and work in the commercial venues along Frankstown and Homewood Avenues. Painters, sculptures, writers, actors, dancers, and potters can also be educated in the community college, such that the college is integrated into the proposed cultural heart.

Also, the institutional core will be integrated into shops and light industry located within the community. These shops may be repairing computers, cars, appliances.... Also, plumbers, electricians, and carpenters will train at the vocational program and work in the community to renovate and rebuild the housing in Homewood. Other workshops can produce clothing, building components, furniture, books.... All of the goods produced in these workshops dispersed throughout the community can be sold in the commercial shops along Frankstown.
INSTITUTIONAL: OPPORTUNITY
FIGURE GROUND

This proposal drawing indicates the location of specific sites and potential buildings to enclose the educational opportunity programs of the institutional heart. The new institutional heart is located just north of an existing institutional core. The key buildings of this existing core are outlined in black. Existing buildings to be renovated and used to house institutional programs are shown in grey. Proposed new buildings are shown in black. The new buildings of the institutional heart are linked by paths to the existing core, and are clustered around an open public space which serves as a campus and community center.

Other existing schools, churches, daycare facilities, and institutional buildings throughout the community are outlined in black. Renovated and proposed new workshops are shown on dispersed sites throughout the residential areas. These production facilities will create job opportunities in Homewood and North Point Breeze and increase the sustainability of these communities.
In order to give Homewood an image of vitality in which the residents can take deep pride, Urban Surge proposes a new cultural core. This cultural core will be a center for performing arts, visual arts, crafts, entertainment, and African-American culture. Dance, theater, film, music, art, and literature programs will be incorporated into the educational opportunities of the CCAC. Studios and workshops will be dispersed throughout the community, producing paintings, jewelry, ceramics, musical instruments, glass works, sculpture, music/CDs, theatrical sets.... All of the products of these studios and workshops can be displayed and sold at galleries and stores located along Homewood Avenue. In this way, Homewood Avenue will be a cultural corridor which links the communities of Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze. The existing Frick Fine Arts Museum in Point Breeze and the new cultural core in Homewood will anchor this cultural corridor. Therefore, the cultural heart of Homewood will not only be the center of creativity, vitality, and entertainment for Homewood residents, it will also attract people from other communities, linking Homewood to the Pittsburgh region.
This figure ground drawing displays the relationship of proposed new buildings to existing buildings within the theme of cultural activities. The cultural heart southeast of the Homewood/Frankstown intersection consists of a proposed urban plaza surrounded by new buildings on the north, east and west. These proposed buildings will house a museum, performance theater, galleries, teaching studios, restaurants, shops, music clubs, or other cultural venues. Two existing churches will anchor the plaza on the south.

Artists' studios and workshops will operate within small structures (renovated houses and small warehouses) integrated into residential neighborhoods.

Existing community organization offices, churches, small commercial shops, the PNC Bank, and the Frick Fine Arts Museum form the foundation for the development of Homewood Avenue as a cultural/commercial corridor. Proposed galleries, craft/art/music shops, and community institution buildings are shown as they tie together these existing assets into a cohesive corridor.
All of the activities proposed through the institutional and cultural hearts will have commercial outlets associated with the goods which they produce. These commercial venues will be focused along Frankstown Avenue, reviving this strip as a commercial main street. Frankstown will be lined with shops, restaurants, grocers, service stores, and clubs. This commercial main street will not only sustain the needs of the local residents, but also attract people from neighboring communities. Portals will be located at the eastern and western ends of Frankstown, at the busstop on the busway, and at the intersection of Penn and Homewood. These portals will signify the entrance and exit of Homewood and the extents of the main street. The two portals on Frankstown Avenue will cater to the daily and local needs of the community while the busstop portal will address the cultural corridor of Homewood Avenue.
This figure ground drawing shows the relationship of existing and proposed buildings and shops along Frankstown Avenue and all the major portals. A remnant of commercial buildings exist along Frankstown from the days when it was a main street. These key buildings will be renovated and stitched together with new stores in order to create a strong pedestrian streetscape.

Small cafes and shops are proposed around small outdoor plazas at the east and west portal of Frankstown Avenue. These small plazas will become the bookends for the public streetscape of the commercial mainstreet.

A new bus station with shops, galleries, cafes, and an urban plaza are proposed at the intersection of the busway and Homewood Avenue. This station/plaza becomes the portal for public transit passengers and those traveling from Point Breeze along Homewood Avenue.

The proposed new building at Penn and Homewood Avenue marks the intersection of Penn, a major Pittsburgh traffic corridor, with the new cultural corridor along Homewood.
This diagram illustrates Urban Surge’s proposal to create a network of public streetscape and small parks to interconnect residential neighborhoods and block communities. Currently, many residential streets in Homewood do not function as a public space because vacant lots and abandoned houses allow the street space to bleed into unoccupied voids. Urban Surge proposes to revive several key residential streets (Tioga and Lang) by creating infill buildings (houses and a few workshops or studios) and dispersed neighborhood parks on vacant lots. The infill housing will fully define the edge of the street as a public space, and the parks will become gathering places for neighbors. The streetscape will be redesigned with trees, lights, parking, and renovated sidewalks. These key interventions will then expand into a complete web of residential streets as viable public space connecting and supporting neighbors and neighborhoods.
This figure ground drawing shows the relationship of existing structures to proposed buildings on two key residential streets: Tioga and Lang. The new structures shown in black will complete the public streetscape. The buildings will reflect the architectural language of that particular block. Porches will mitigate between private interior spaces and the public street scape. The details of this theme will be fully explored in larger scale drawings later in this proposal.
This master diagram shows the interaction of all the urban design themes in one integrated proposal. The many themes are intertwined and overlayed in order to create mixed use and dynamic urban life within Homewood. Together, these themes of an institutional heart, cultural heart and corridor, commercial main street and portals, and a neighborhood web encompass our vision for Homewood. This vision proposes opportunity, connection, civic pride, and neighborhood support as key goals for transforming Homewood into a vibrant community.
This figure ground is a composite of the previous figure grounds. It shows the comprehensive scope of interventions proposed by Urban Surge and how they weave together key existing buildings.

Urban Surge
proposal themes
Homewood and North Point Breeze
This drawing depicts the proposed use of land throughout Homewood and North Point Breeze. The drawing shows the interrelationship of residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial land uses and their mixing at various places throughout these communities.
This drawing highlights the public realm within Homewood and North Point Breeze including Urban Surge's proposal. While the heart of Homewood currently lacks a public gathering space, the Homewood we envision will have two public plazas at its heart. These plazas will be connected to the existing Willie Stargell field and Westinghouse Park by a new pedestrian path. Pedestrian walkways will also connect these plazas to Frankstown and Homewood Avenues.

Frankstown Avenue will be a main public corridor. The street trees, street lights, and small shops will create a pedestrian friendly environment. The public space of Frankstown Avenue will begin and end at small plazas, creating portals for this commercial main street.

Homewood Avenue will also be a main public corridor. It will begin and end at the intersection with Frankstown and at the entrance to Frick Park adjacent to the Frick Fine Arts Museum in Point Breeze. This major public space will weave together Homewood, North Point Breeze, and Point Breeze.
This drawing depicts the proposed changes to the street grids within Homewood and North Point Breeze. The areas of intervention are shaded in grey. They include connecting Lang and Murtland Streets with bridges, continuing Meade Boulevard all the way through to Homewood Avenue, connecting the street grid by the Performing Arts School in east Homewood, and creating new through streets in South Homewood which help connect this neighborhood to the center of Homewood.
This drawing highlights the major areas of intervention proposed by Urban Surge. Homewood Ave., Frankstown Ave., and the plazas are specific interventions which are detailed on the following pages. Tioga St. is also detailed in the following pages, but it is a typical street intervention which could be applied to any street throughout Homewood and North Point Breeze. The highlighted rectangles signify areas to be explained more fully through plan details, sections, and perspectives in the following section of this report.
TIOGA STREET PROPOSAL
PLANS
SECTIONS
PERSPECTIVES

PLAZA PROPOSAL
PLANS
SECTIONS
PERSPECTIVES

HOMEWOOD AVENUE PROPOSAL
PLANS
SECTIONS
PERSPECTIVE
Urban Surge's proposals are explored in detail in each of these three study areas: the institutional and cultural plazas, the busway transit stop and Homewood Avenue, and Tioga Street as a typical residential street. For each study area, plans fully explain how the intervention will work, including new buildings relating to existing structures, planting within the public realm, pedestrian paths, and parking and service. The three dimension of qualities of these interventions are then explained through sections and perspectives.
This figure ground drawing describes the relationship between new and existing buildings. Existing buildings to remain as they are shown in white. The building shaded grey are those which will be renovated. The black buildings are new in-fill homes. These in-fill houses will stitch together the existing homes. They will occupy the currently vacant lots and help define the street as a public space. Thus, the streetscape will no longer bleed and disintegrate into vacant lots. These new houses will conform to the setbacks, building form, and architectural detail of the existing houses on the street. In this way, the street can be experienced as a whole once again, within which individuals can express their uniqueness.
On-street sidewalks will be the main pedestrian paths through the residential neighborhoods. These paths will connect the dispersed parks throughout the neighborhood. Emphasising the sidewalks as the major pedestrian routes will also help the streets feel as a safe, occupied public realm.
This drawing shows street trees and other vegetation which reinforce the public realm of the street and small parks. These street trees help to create a “ceiling” for the street space, bringing the scale of this space to appropriate human scale.

Trees and vegetation are also used to define the small parks as outdoor public rooms. The vegetation creates buffers between this public space where children play and neighbors gather from the private yards of the residents.
Parking in the residential areas will mainly be along the street. This on-street parking will support the street as a public realm, with people going to and from there cars helping to keep the street occupied. However, some additional parking will be located in the back alleys behind the houses. The parking areas are shown with the solid lines and the hatched areas in this drawing.

Service, including electric wires, trash collection, and water and sewage lines, will occur in the back alleys so that the streets can remain uncluttered public realms. These service access routes are shown with dashed lines in this drawing.
This drawing shows the use activities which will take place within the buildings along Tioga Street. The light grey buildings will be residential houses, both rowhouses and single family detached units. The darker grey structures will be used as light industry or small production facilities.

These uses will be associated with the educational and cultural facilities in the plazas, as described in the proposal themes.
This small park represents a typical gathering space to be made from lots which are currently vacant. It will be a place for children to play and for neighbors to gather for barbecues or to walk their dogs.
This figure ground drawing describes the relationship between proposed new institutional buildings and key existing ones. Existing churches, schools, the Carnegie Library and Post Office buildings will remain as they are shown in white. The new buildings are shown in black.

The plaza on the left will hold educational and financial institutions such as an expanded Community College of Allegheny County, community bank for house and small business loans, job training center, college placement office, and managerial training with a partnership to local small industry and production.

The plaza on the right will hold a diverse arrangement of cultural spaces. These include, a theater, cinema, studios for performing and visual arts, a cultural museum and a school for the arts. These activities relate strongly with the Homewood Avenue cultural development.
Wide sidewalks will connect the various activities within each institutional plaza. Strong links are made between the two plazas to enhance the uses which relate across Homewood Avenue. Direct paths are created to connect the plazas with key existing institutions. Homewood Avenue will become the primary pedestrian street which connects the cultural and commercial spaces with the institutional plazas.
This drawing shows the different patterns of planting to be used in each event. The main commercial avenues of Homewood and Frankstown have trees which are planted regularly. This creates a pleasant pedestrian walk and good access to the shops. In contrast, the residential streets have trees planted close together to define a street space. (see 8.35) Several distinct patterns of trees in the two plazas help to reduce the scale of the space and define the different uses which are possible. These uses include an outdoor theater, courtyards in which to share lunch or teach a class and open fields.
PLAZA PLAN
PARKING AND SERVICE

The light grey lines refer to street-side parking which serves commercial shoppers, students and residents. The two buildings in light grey have lower level parking. The large number of spaces provides parking for the college, theater and museum. Service alleys are designated by dark grey dashed lines.

Urban Surge
proposal details
Homewood and North Point Breeze
This drawing shows the various courtyards and pedestrian connections within the institutional plaza.
This drawing represents the layout of spaces within the cultural plaza. An outdoor theater and courtyard are the prominent features.
INSTITUTIONAL & CULTURAL PLAZAS
SECTION A
SCALE 1"=80'

PEDESTRIAN PATH
SECTION D
SCALE: 1"=10'

penn avenue corridor
PLAZA PERSPECTIVE
FRANKSTOWN AND HOMEWOOD AVENUES

Urban Surge
proposal details
Homewood and North Point Breeze
This figure ground drawing describes the relationship between new and existing buildings. Existing buildings to remain as they are shown in white. The buildings shaded in grey are those which will be renovated. The black buildings are new construction. The new buildings will be small commercial and residential units as well as a transit stop at the busway and rail lines.
THOMAS STREET

MEADE STREET

PENN AVENUE

penn avenue corridor

Urban Surge
proposal details
Homewood and North Point Breeze
HOMEWOOD AVENUE PLAN
PEDESTRIAN PATHS

Sidewalks will connect through the various residential streets. Homewood Avenue will be the main connection between the residences of North Point Breeze and the commercial, cultural and educational resources of Homewood. Realizing the effects of the rail and bus overpass, the quality of materials and lighting (day and night) will be prime considerations for making the walk under the tracks pleasant and safe.
Street trees will define the character of the residential streets. The trees along Homewood Avenue will be a little bit larger than the other residential streets to address its prominence as a primary access between Homewood and North Point Breeze. Although new cultural/commercial buildings will be built along Homewood Avenue, the intention is to maintain the residential qualities of the street.
Urban Surge
proposal details
Homewood and North Point Breeze

penn avenue corridor
This figure ground drawing describes the relationship between residential buildings and cultural/commercial buildings. The buildings in light gray are residential units. While the buildings in dark gray are cultural and commercial spaces. A few examples of which are galleries, cafés, dance clubs, studios and workshops, small theaters, comedy clubs, music stores, art suppliers, art lessons, etc. All of these are designed to draw from the wealth of cultural spirit in Homewood and North Point Breeze.
THOMAS STREET

MEADE STREET

N. HOMEOOD AVENUE

PENN AVENUE

penn avenue corridor
HOMEWOOD AVENUE
DETAIL PLAN
HOMEWOOD STATION AND PLAZA
CULTURAL CORRIDOR: HOMEWOOD AVE
HOMEWOOD AVENUE
STREET SECTION

SECTION E
SCALE: 1" = 10'

30.0'

8.64